

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Office Action dated April 7, 2006, has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

Claims 1-25 are rejected and claims 7, 16, 20, 22 and 25 are objected to by the Examiner. Claims 1, 7, 16, 20, 22 and 25 have been amended, and claim 8 has been canceled. Claims 1-25 remain pending in this application.

In the Office Action, claims 20 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,754,248 to Belica (hereinafter “Belica”). Claims 1, 2, 7-16, 18 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Publication No. 2002/0190630 to Lee et al. (hereinafter “Lee”) in view of Belica. Claims 3-6 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lee in view of Belica and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,730,145 to van der Meer et al. (hereinafter “van der Meer”). Claims 23-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Belica in view of van der Meer. Claims 7, 16, 20, 22, and 25 are objected to because of informalities.

Claims 7, 16, 20, 22, and 25 have been amended, so the objections thereto are now moot.

The rejection of claims 20 and 22 is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested. Claims 20 and 22 are allowable over the cited references in that each of these claims recites a combination of elements including, for example, “wherein the thickness of the portion of the split core proximate a portion of the attachment groves is greater than the thickness from the attachment grove to the inside surface of the split core”. Belica does not teach or suggest at least this feature of the claimed invention.

The examiner states that Belica discloses that the area where the clamp and core meet may be slightly undercut to form a notch or groove. But, the Applicant respectfully disagrees with this. Belica discloses that the area where *each tab* joins the body of the core may be slightly undercut as shown to form a notch for more positive engagement of the spring clips. (See col 4 lines 9-11) As shown Fig. 3, Belica teaches a notch formed *on the tabs* (34a,b and 35a,b) not on the exterior surface of the split cores. The cores of Belica do not have attachment grooves. The Examiner identifies 31 and 32 as attachment grooves. Actually 31 and 32 are spring clips. Therefore, there can be no difference in thickness as claimed in the present invention.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 20 and 22 are allowable over the cited references.

The rejection of claims 1, 2, 7-16, and 18-19 is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested. Claims 1, 2, 7-16, and 18-19 are allowable over the cited references in that each of these claims recites a combination of elements including, for example, “wherein the thickness of a portion of the core proximate a portion of the attachment grooves is greater than the thickness from the attachment groove to the inside surface of the core.” Lee nor Belica, singly or in combination, teach or suggest at least this feature of the claimed invention. Claims 1, 2, 7-16, and 18-19 are allowable over Belica for the same reasons as stated above for claims 20 and 22. Further, Lee fails to cure the deficiencies of Belica. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1, 2, 7-16, and 18-19 are allowable over the cited references.

Claims 3-6 and 17 are also allowable over over Lee and Belica for the same reasons stated above with respect to claim 1. Further, van der Meer fail to cure the deficiencies of Lee and Belica, therefore claims 3-6 and 17 are allowable over Lee, van der Meer, and Belica.

Claims 23-25 are also allowable over over Belica for the same reasons stated above with respect to claim 20. Further, van der Meer fails to cure the deficiencies of Belica, therefore claims 23-25 are allowable over Belica and van der Meer.

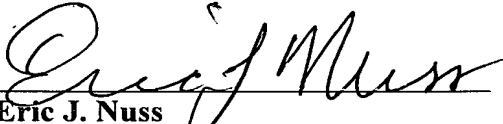
Applicants believe the foregoing amendments place the application in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911. *A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.*

Respectfully submitted,

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